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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Georgia

Addendum

Information provided by Georgia in follow-up to the concluding observations*

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Note: The present document is being issued in English, French and Spanish only.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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Paragraph 21, Violence against women

1. Recalling its general recommendation No. 19 on violence against women, the Committee urges the State party:

(a) To take measures to prevent the growing number of murders of women by their husbands and partners and other forms of domestic violence;

(b) To encourage women to report acts of sexual and domestic violence by raising awareness about the criminal nature of such acts, to ensure the effective investigation of cases of violence against women, to prosecute and punish perpetrators with sanctions commensurate with the gravity of the crime and to provide victims with adequate compensation for damages suffered;

(c) To ensure that all women who are victims of violence have access to effective protection and assistance, including State-funded shelters, and to improve cooperation with relevant non-governmental organizations in this respect;

(d) To prohibit and adequately sanction the practice of virginity tests carried out on women in violation of their right to privacy.

Information provided by Georgia

2. Government of Georgia prioritizes combating domestic violence and violence against women. In this respect, since 2014 Georgia has taken important steps.

3. In November 2014, the Inter-Agency Council on Implementing Measures to Combat Domestic Violence was re-established at the Administration of the Government of Georgia. Assistant to the Prime Minister on Human Rights and Gender Equality issues was appointed as a chairperson of the Council. The Council is a policy making Body tasked with coordination and monitoring of Government Agencies involved in implementation of National Action Plan on the Measures to Combat Domestic Violence in Georgia. The last meeting of the Council concerned the implementation of the Action Plan of 2013-2015. The Action plan for 2016-2017 was approved by the Cabinet in 2016. It is noteworthy, that the newly adopted Action Plan has been expanded to violence against women with the aim to bring the national commitments with the requirements of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, which was signed by Georgia on June 19, 2014. Moreover, 2016-2017 National Action Pan contains new guarantees such as outcome indicators, identified leading and cooperating agencies — new approach that simplifies evaluation of the implementation of the plan.

4. In November 2014, a Consultative Group to the Inter-Agency Council Implementing Measures to Combat Domestic Violence consisting of civil society representatives and international organizations was also established. The main objective of the Group is to elaborate relevant recommendations for the Inter-Agency Council. In July 2015, the group meeting was convened to discuss the issue of early marriages. In addition, in September 2015, Task force on the Issues of Early Marriages was established by the Inter-Agency Council and Gender Theme Group (GTG) coordinated by the UN family. The main task of the Group is addressing the practice of early marriages. In December 2015, the Task Force undertook mapping of the Government Strategies and Action Plans that were relevant to address/integrate Child Marriage prevention. As a result relevant policy

recommendations were integrated in the Governmental Human Rights Action Plan for 2016-2017.

5. In December 2014, the members of the Victim Status Granting Group (Status Identification Group) were re-elected. In addition, 8 civil society organizations were authorized to submit the cases on behalf of a potential victim of domestic violence to the Status Identification Group. In July 2015, after relevant trainings were provided for the members of the Status Identification Group and relevant instruments/guidelines were developed, the Group became operational. In 2015 the Group received 27 applications from which 18 applications were satisfied, 6 applications were rejected and 3 applications were considered inadmissible. In 2016 (to date) the Group received 23 applications from which 18 applications were satisfied, 5 applications were rejected and none were found inadmissible.

6. For the sake of effectiveness of the policy against domestic violence the special unit - Crisis Centre for possible victims of domestic violence is being established. Currently, all the necessary facilities are prepared for commencing the functioning of the centre and presumable time of its operation is September 2016.

7. Implementation of the Security Council Resolution No. 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, No.1325, No.1820, No.1888, No.1889 and No.1960, remains a priority for the Government of Georgia. After the coordination of the National Coordination Group was designated from the Parliament to the Assistant to the Prime Minister on Human Rights and Gender Equality issues (in 2015), from October 2015 Government of Georgia started the drafting process of 2016-2017 National Action Plan on implementation of the UNSC resolution N 1325. In order to ensure quality of the new Action Plan, with the support of the UN-Women, Government of Georgia organized 3 day training course on development of indicators, coordination and accountability and budgeting. Similar to the National Action Plan on the Measures to Combat Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Georgia, outcome indicators, identified leading and cooperating agencies were added to the National Action Plan on implementation of the UNSC resolution No.1325. The Action Plan was finalized and approved by the Cabinet in 2016.

8. On September 28, 2015 at Global Leader's Meeting, Government of Georgia committed to further improve Georgia's agenda on gender equality and women's empowerment policy framework by setting up an Inter-Ministerial Commission on Gender Equality, Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. As a result, with the assistance of the UN Country Team in Georgia, considerable work has been done by the Government of Georgia to develop a relevant legal framework which will be approved in the nearest future. The Commission shall be mandated inter alia to formulate gender equality strategy and thematic action plans including National Action Plan on the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 and ensure its effective implementation by well-coordinated inter-ministerial approach.

9. Georgia is one of the 22 countries who agreed to voluntarily present and review 13 prioritized and nationalized Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-s) during the review at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2016 — the first since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. It is worth stressing that considerable work has been done by the Government of Georgia to nationalize SDG-s with special emphasis put on ensuring that all SDGs have gender-sensitive indicators. Special efforts will also be made to ensure that gender equality policies reflect commitments

made in the nationalized SDGs and their targets and the enhanced institutional mechanism (Inter-Ministerial Commission) at the executive level ensures smooth implementation of gender aspects of SDGs.

10. In February 2016, a new regulation was added to the Law of Georgia on Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of its Victims and in the Organic Law of Georgia Local Self-Government Code. According to this regulation local self-government is authorized to take measures against domestic violence. Local government bodies may participate in domestic violence prevention activities, which may include raising awareness, analysis of the causes of conflict (preconditions), mediation, etc., as well as rehabilitation of victims of domestic violence. During the fulfilment of the activities against domestic violence the local authorities cooperate with relevant governmental organs and non-government organizations.

11. In November 2015, a regulation in Civil Code allowing marriage of a child between 16 and 18 upon the condition of obtaining her parents' consent was replaced by amendment that authorizes the court only to approve such marriages. In addition, amendments to the Criminal Code have introduced the definition of Forced Marriage. In the Law on Legal Assistance made it possible for the victims of domestic violence to receive all the benefits prescribed in this regard.

12. On April 27, 2016 the Parliament of Georgia has adopted law amendments in the procedural legislation of Georgia according to which it has added the new basis for revision of a court judgment. In particular, new amendments make it possible to revise a judgment on the basis of decision of inter alia the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as a newly confirmed case. Besides, the person is already given the right to apply to the court on the issue of compensation, if this is declared by the relevant decision.

13. In order to manifest incidents of domestic violence, specially trained representatives of municipal territorial entities have close ties with the so-called leaders of buildings. Also, in territorial units is launched a hotline for domestic violence incidents in full compliance with the confidentiality.

14. It is of crucial importance that on June 19, 2014, Georgia signed the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter - Istanbul Convention).

15. For the effective harmonization of Georgian legislation to Istanbul Convention in October, 2014 the Government of Georgia adopted the legal amendments to the following 11 legal acts: Criminal Code of Georgia, Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia, Civil Code, Law on Combating Domestic Violence, Administrative Procedure Code, Law on Legal Aid, Law on the Rights of the Patients, Code on Imprisonment, Law on Non-custodial Punishments and Probation, Administrative Offences Code and Law on the Medical Practice. According to these amendments forced marriage was criminalized (article 150), the definition of "Domestic violence" has been modified in compliance with Istanbul Convention, free legal aid service was introduced for the victims of Domestic Violence, the negligence was acknowledged as the form of violence under the Law on Combating Domestic Violence. Notably, the law on Non-custodial Punishments and Probation introduced the mechanism oriented on the violent attitude of the perpetrators of domestic violence and his/her rehabilitation.

16. Additionally, for the ratification of Istanbul Convention, 17 legal acts were revised by the Ministry of Justice and respective draft amendments were introduced to the Criminal Code of Georgia, Civil Procedure Code, Law on Combating Domestic Violence, Administrative Procedure Code, Law on Lawyers, Law on Local Self-Government, Law on Arms, Law on Legal Aid, Law on the Rights of the Patients, Code on Imprisonment, Law on Police, Law on the Medical Practice, Law on Public Service, Labour Code, Law on Legal Status of Foreigners, Law on Higher Education, Law on Secondary Education.

17. The elaboration process of the amendments was quite inclusive involving all relevant governmental agencies as well as local and international NGOs. Their feedback and recommendations were reflected in the final draft. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice took the commitment to promote involvement of all representatives of our society, including minorities and rural population, in the elaboration process of the amendments to reflect their individual needs in the legislation. Therefore, meetings and discussions in different regions of Georgia were organized to introduce the draft amendments to the citizens.

18. The draft amendments aims at harmonization of domestic legislation with Istanbul Convention, overcoming challenges related to the violence against women and domestic violence, prevention and elimination of the cases of violence against women and domestic violence, extension of the legal remedies for the women victims of violence. For instance, draft amendments to the Criminal Code of Georgia foresee criminalization of stalking. Furthermore, the definition of rape will be modified to make it in compliance with the Convention.

19. Additionally, the scope of the law on Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of the Victims of the Domestic Violence will be expanded and it will cover measures on both combating violence against women and domestic violence. The draft amendments aim at extending fight against violence against women not only within but also outside of the family environment. The legislative package also provides modification of the definitions of violence against women, victim, family member and perpetrator.

20. Apart from this, promotion of raising awareness of general population on violence against women and domestic violence is one of the priorities for the Government of Georgia. In this regard, the representatives of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia permanently organize information meetings for local population, especially for ethnic minorities and those who are living in rural areas. They are informed about their rights to be protected from violence and available state run services for the victims of violence and domestic violence.

21. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice of Georgia promotes engagement of civil society organization in preventive measures on violence against women and strengthen cooperation with NGOs in this field. Therefore, in 2015 the Ministry of Justice issued one-off grant of 15,000 GEL for the local NGO which conducted different awareness raising activities on violence against women and domestic violence. Within the framework of the grant project information meetings were held in all regions of Georgia, 5000 multilingual leaflets (Georgian, English, Russian, Azerbaijani and Armenian) were produced and disseminated, also a short film (video) was produced and broadcasted on local TV stations.

22. Apart from this, the Ministry of Justice will start 2-months awareness raising campaign in 2016. Different activities (Production and dissemination of the video; Information meetings with local population, etc.) are included in the information campaign which particularly aims at informing general population about the novelties introduced in national legislation on violence against women and domestic violence; promoting civil responsibility of all persons and encouraging them to report the violence cases, even if they are only the direct or indirect witnesses of violence/crime.

23. In order to ensure a better response on existing situation and monitor and coordinate activities of the police on the facts of domestic violence, special Commission on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Effective Response has been created within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Composition of the Commission was approved by the Ministerial order in 2014. The Commission is headed by the Deputy Minister and includes managers of relevant departments. The Commission focuses on the development of the monitoring mechanism, identification of the gaps and elaboration of appropriate recommendations and legislative initiatives. The Commission actively cooperates with the NGOs and international organizations working on the human rights and specifically on domestic violence issues.

24. The Commission elaborated draft amendments to the Criminal Code of Georgia in order to severe the sanction of Article 1261 on "domestic violence". Amendment has been approved by the Parliament of Georgia in 2015 and envisages imprisonment up to one year in case of commitment action foreseen by Paragraph 1 of this article.

25. Furthermore, 2 law enforcers (male and female) have been assigned in each region in order to report secretary of the above-mentioned commission regarding the duty implementations in the zone of their responsibilities. In 2014, they went through special trainings, which were conducted in the cooperation of the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia. Trainings are held permanently in order to keep the staff informed about relevant updates.

26. The Ministry of Internal Affairs ensures 24/7 operation of the hotline — 112 — across the territory of Georgia. Operators having specific skills and expertise work on the hotline duly reacting on the received information. The hotline is free of charge throughout Georgia.

27. The Ministry of Internal Affairs ensures fulfilment of awareness raising campaigns on domestic violence among the population. In cooperation with the relevant partner organizations, The Ministry elaborates and distributes the informative brochures and leaflets.

28. On November 25, 2014, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in cooperation with other state agencies and with the support the US Embassy and UN Women, launched the social campaign against domestic violence — "No to Violence" with the aim to raise public awareness on domestic violence and to outline the importance of the involvement of citizens in the elimination of this problem.

29. In the frames of the campaign the Ministry of Internal Affairs:

- Elaborated and aired an informative video;
- Conducted public meetings with population;

- Conducted interactive meetings with school students;
- Elaborated and distributed brochures among the population;
- Accomplished competitions for best article, best video, best slogan;
- Winners of the competition were awarded by the Minister of the Internal Affairs.

30. Representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs participate in the TV talk shows and take part in radio broadcast dedicated to domestic violence problem.

31. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science and with support of PH International, implements the project: "Program on Legal Education". Within the framework of the project course-book "Legal Culture" was elaborated for the 9th grade pupils of Georgian public schools, which is an annex of the mandatory subject — "civil education". Classes are conducted by law enforcement Officer and teacher jointly. Topic about violence and bulling takes important part in the course-book, separate chapter is dedicate to the domestic violence issues.

32. The police officer who is called on the place of domestic violence records detailed information of the case, including all data about offenders, victims, witnesses, informers (name, age, place of work, relationship and etc.) The gathered information is transferred to the Analytical Department of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia. Information Centre of the Analytical Department maintains the statistics on domestic conflicts, issued restrictive orders and launched investigations.

33. Segregated statistical data is published on the official website of the Ministry [www.police.ge]. According to the statistical data, the number of issued restrictive orders and launched investigations as well as prosecutions on domestic violence has been increased about 3 times since 2014, which suggests the tendency of reporting by population to police has increased.

34. Police officer/s who work on the spot of the case are equipped with printed materials describing information about the services provided to the victims of domestic violence by the State shelters. Materials contain information on hotlines, which is free of charge and gives relevant consultation to the interested person/s.

35. A six-month basic training of police officers takes place at the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Tbilisi. It covers all categories of police (patrol, district, criminal, border police, coast guards, etc.) and includes: training on human rights, criminal law, domestic violence law, administrative law and procedures, two weeks of field work at a police station in the middle of the course and one week at the end of the six-month course for patrol police. Domestic violence is being touched upon in many of the topics taught during the course including during field work at a police station but is especially taught in a one day (8 hour) course. Some 2,000 police officers annually complete the training.

36. In parallel, Ministry of Internal Affairs actively cooperates with the local NGO and international organizations. As a result of the joint effort trainings and seminars for law enforcers have been conducted in different regions of Georgia.

37. Combating domestic violence and violence against women is one of the priorities of the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia. In order to effectively

implement this task, study of criminal cases, preparation of comprehensive analysis, trainings for prosecutors and investigators as well as various preventive exercises are organized annually.

38. In 2015, the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia has conducted comprehensive analysis of violent crimes including domestic violence cases. For the purposes of the analysis, all facts of domestic violence were studied. Within the framework of the study all investigations launched in 2015 across the country under Article 140 of Criminal Code of Georgia were analysed in order to determine the most common problems of investigations, to identify the need of elaboration the prosecutorial guidelines and effective prevention of sexual crime, namely sexual intercourse or other kind of sexual contact with a person under sixteen.

39. It is noteworthy that similar analysis was prepared in 2014 by the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia. Based on the study and as a result of analysis of domestic violence and violent cases, the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia has elaborated two recommendations for prosecutors: 1) Regarding the conduct of compulsory investigative and procedural actions on Articles 111 and 1261 (Domestic Violence) of Criminal Code of Georgia and 2) Regarding the conduct of compulsory investigative and procedural actions on Articles 117, 118, 120, 125 of the Criminal Code of Georgia. The recommendations were disseminated on January 23, 2015.

40. In 2015, 725 individuals were charged under Article 126 (Domestic Violence) of Criminal Code of Georgia on the cases of domestic violence. According to the available statistics, identification and prosecution of domestic violence cases have been increased up to 77% in 2015 as compared to the previous years. With regard to the crimes against sexual freedom and integrity committed by family member, 3 individuals were charged under Article 137 (Rape), 3 individuals under Article 138 (Violent Act of Sexual Nature), 55 individuals under Article 140 (Sexual intercourse or other kind of sexual contact with a person under sixteen) of Criminal Code of Georgia.

41. In 2014-2015, the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia faced serious challenges in terms of tackling the women murders based on domestic violence. In 2014, 19 women and in 2015, 8 women became victims (were killed) as a result of women murder and intentional grave damage to health based on domestic violence. In all cases perpetrators were revealed by investigation. All of them were indicted and convicted based on court judgements.

42. For the purposes of identification of the most common problems of investigation and identification of further prevention measures, the Human Rights Protection Unit of Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia has studied 27 domestic violence criminal cases initiated under the qualification of murder of women and intentional grave damage to health resulting to death committed in 2014-2015.

43. Within the framework of Chief Prosecutor's Office project "Public Prosecutors", prosecutors permanently conduct meetings on topics domestic violence and violence against women with population. In 2015, 35 informational meetings were held with 1335 citizens in the different cities. Participants of the meetings were explained the definition of domestic violence; the discussions went on the main behavioural patterns of perpetrator and victim and results of violence, domestic violence protection mechanisms, early marriage — sexual contact with a

person under sixteen, illegal deprivation of liberty, rape. The citizens were provided the information with regard the existing victim shelters and state referral system, hotlines. Informational leaflets were distributed as well.

44. In the process of raising public awareness, within the initiative of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia, a Local Council was established in Batumi, on March 10, 2016. Council plays important role. It consists of representatives of law enforcement, local self-government, executive branch, NGOs and other representatives of society.

45. On May, 2016, within the framework of Local Council various events aimed at public awareness-raising and crime prevention were conducted — prosecutors met school pupils, teachers, students, local population. Leaflets on domestic violence and violence against women were prepared for further distribution among population.

46. The training of prosecutors on domestic violence, violence against women and gender issues is one of the priorities of the Prosecutor 's Office of Georgia.

47. In 2015, 5 learning activities including the training of trainers for employees of the Office were completed successfully on domestic violence issues. In total, 75 prosecutors are trained. Trainings covered all territorial units of Prosecutor 's Office. Together with ordinary prosecutors, the beneficiaries of trainings were middle level managers as well. Within the framework of these trainings, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and phenomena of domestic violence against women and girls were discussed. Trainings covered international and regional legal framework on women rights, referral schemes of domestic violence and violence against women and girls, multisectoral participation mechanisms, effective prosecution, examination of evidence. The content of trainings covered themes such as: types of domestic violence, restraining and protective orders, and challenges related to distinguishing the administrative and criminal limb of domestic violence, child protection from domestic violence, referral procedures on domestic violence cases involving children, specificities of communication with domestic violence victims, psychological aspects of domestic violence.

48. In 2015-2016, LEPL State Fund for Protection and Assistance of (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking (hereinafter — State Fund) held various meetings, public lectures or trainings on domestic violence and trafficking, to raise the awareness of the population with respect to legislative news, preventive measures and the Services of the State Fund:

- April 21, 2015, meeting held with the pupils of Tbilisi Public School No.64;
- April 22, 2015, meeting held with the personnel of Shida Kartli Regional Main Division of Ministry of internal Affairs in Gori;
- April 29, 2015, meeting held with the pupils of Tbilisi Public School No.47;
- May 6, 2015, meeting held with the pupils of Tbilisi Public School No.62;
- May 7, 2015, meeting held with the pupils of Tkibuli Public School No.6;
- May 8, 2015, meeting held with the pupils of Kutaisi Public School No.7;

- October 9, 2015, meeting held with the pupils of Tbilisi Private School "Albioni";
- October 9, 2015, meeting held with the pupils of Batumi Public school No.1 in Adjara;
- November 18, 2015, informational meeting held with the higher grade pupils of Kvemo Khodasheni Public School in Telavi Municipality;
- October 9, 2015, meeting held with the students of Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University in Adjara;
- December 2, 2015, lecture held with the students of Georgian-American University (GAU);
- June 10, 2015, meeting held with the personnel of Kvemo Kartli Regional Main Division of Ministry of internal Affairs in Rustavi to inform population better about news of domestic violence and existing legal mechanisms;
- July 23, 2015, training "Legal mechanism and modern tendencies to combat on human trafficking " held in the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia by support of EU delegation in Georgia; Personnel of shelters for the victims of trafficking and central office of the fund participated in the training (4 men and 7 women);
- July 29, 2015, informational meeting held with the Pankisi women about issues of domestic violence in cooperation with the Council of Women Elders of the Pankisi Gorge and the State fund;
- August 6, 2015, training of Statistics and analysis by the European Union (EU); Interagency Coordination Council for Fight Against trafficking;
- August 31-September 1, 2015, training conducted for the personnel of the State fund and Ministry of Internal Affairs by the International Canter for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) within the project "Enhancing Georgian Migration management" (ENIGMMA);
- September 14-18, 2015, "Training for the future of the labour inspectors on forced labour and human trafficking" held by financial support of the International Labour Organization (ILO). 2 personnel of the state fund attended the training. One employee of the fund was invited as a trainer;
- October 14, 2015, informational meeting held in Grigol Robakidze University within the week of Global Diaspora in the issues of Diaspora by the Office of the State Minister of Georgia;
- October 22, 2015, public event held for the students of Tbilisi State University (Round table-discussion by participation of the organizations involved in the field of Trafficking). Organizers: EU delegation in Georgia, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). Representatives of the state fund participated (three);
- October 26-27, 2015, Public lecture held for Tbilisi University Students and pupils of public schools about trafficking at the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with Interagency Coordination Council for Fight against trafficking;

- October 28-29, 2015, Public meetings held with the students of Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki Universities, pupils of public schools and representatives of local non-governmental organizations in cooperation with the representatives of International Organization for Migration (IOM);
- November 2-4, 2015, training held for detective-investigators. "Investigative practices and methods for fight against human trafficking";
- November 12, 2015, lecture held with the students of Ilia State University, School of Law;
- November 17, 2015, an informational meeting held with the students of Telavi Iakob Gogebashvili State University;
- On December 7-11, 2015, training held with the students of Iv. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University self-government School of Law. Training Course; "Migration-Trafficking". Trainings conducted at the Ministry of Justice of Georgia;

49. The following happened in 2016:

- March 10, 2016, meeting held with the higher grade pupils of Tbilisi public School No.21;
- March 17, 2016, meeting held with the pupils, parents and teachers of Khashuri Public School No.1 and with the personnel of Khashuri Resource Centre (50 participants);
- April 5, 2016, informational meeting held with the pupils of Bobokvati public school, in Adjaria region, Kobulati municipality (30 participants);
- May 6, 2016, informational meeting held with the 10th grade pupils and teachers of Tbilisi Gldani Public school No.115. The representatives of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and non-governmental organization "Minerva" with the representatives of the state fund participated in the meeting (50 participants);
- May 10, 2016, informational meeting held with the 9th, 10th, 11th grade pupils and teachers of Marneuli Public School in Marneuli Public Service Hall (20 participants);
- May 11, 2016, informational meeting held with the 9th, 10th and 11th grade pupils and teachers of Martkopi public school of Gardabani Municipality (45 participants). Representatives of Secretariat of Interagency Coordination Council and International Organization for Migration (IOM) participated in the meeting;
- May 11, 2016, informational meeting held with the 9th, 10th and 11th grade teachers of Sartichala public school of Gardabani Municipality and local inhabitants (30 participants). Representatives of Secretariat of Interagency Coordination Council and International Organization for Migration (IOM) participated in the meeting;
- March 2, 2016, public lecture conducted with the students of Tbilisi Iv. Javakhishvili State University;

- March 24, 2016, meeting held in the Association "Atinati". Members of Youth centers of the Association "Atinati", pupils of Zugdidi and surrounding public schools and students of Shota Meskhia State Teaching University of Zugdidi participated in the meeting. (35 participants);
- March 15, 2016, public lecture held for students and lectures of European University of Georgia (80 participants);
- March 17, 2016, meeting held with the students of Khashuri professional college "Etaloni" and Ilia Chavchavadze College of Khashuri (35 students);
- April 12, 2016, informational meeting with the students of Samtskhe-Javakheti State University. Representative of the international Organization for Migration (IOM) participated in the meeting with the topic on migration. (40 participants);
- April 12, 2016, meeting held in the Public Service hall of Akhaltsikhe. The representatives of the Fund have met with the project participants (aged between 14-18) of the "Leadership House" of the Centre of Crime Prevention (15 participants);
- May 17, 2016, meeting held with the students of Gori State Teaching University (20 participants);
- February 4, 2016, informational meeting held in the medical-psychological centre "Tanadgoma" (10 participants);
- March 9, 2016, training conducted for the operators of consultation hotline for domestic violence and human trafficking of the State Fund;
- March 14, 2016, informational meeting held with the local population (Kist, Muslim population) in Khvareltskali (located in the gorge of Pankisi) and the representatives of local non-governmental organizations in the public centre of Public Service Development Agency of the Ministry of Justice. The meeting was held with the representatives of Migration International Organization (IOM) and in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice (15 participants);
- March 21, 2016, informational meeting held in the crisis centre of non-governmental organization "World Vision" for children who live and work on the streets, their parents and the personnel of the centre;
- March 25, 2016, meeting held with the representatives of local non-governmental organizations, personnel of criminal and patrol police and local social service centre in the association "Atinati" (20 participants);
- March 25, 2016, meeting held with the representatives of the project participants (aged between14-18) of the "Leadership House" in the Centre for Crime Prevention of Zugdidi (30 participants);
- March 24, 2016, meeting held with the personnel of City Council in Zugdidi (25 participants);
- April 7, 2016, lawyer of the State Fund participated in TV program "Contact at 8" on TV company "Maestro".

50. The State Fund provides the victims of the domestic violence with the following services:

- Medical assistance;
- Legal aid (including legal representation in court);
- Psychological aid;
- Support in solving social problems;
- Hotline Service.

Medical assistance

51. The service includes the identification of health condition, medical needs, first aid medical services, provision of medicines.

Legal aid

52. The service covers: awareness raising on legal issues, preparing all necessary legal documents, legal assistance including representation in courts (if necessary, referral).

Psychological aid

53. The service consists of the following steps: individual and group psychological consultation and rehabilitation, crisis intervention, emotional and psychological support, psychological education, assistance in defining their future perspectives/recovering control over their lives.

Support for solution of social problems

54. The Support for solution of social problems includes researching information regarding the available resources in the field of social assistance and providing the data to beneficiaries. In addition, providing them with information regarding educational opportunities; Assistance in employment. Connecting with different experts and coordinating services according the needs of beneficiaries.

Shelter service

55. The shelters are opened for victims of domestic violence regardless of their race, skin colour, language, sex, religion, political or other opinions, national, ethnic, and social affiliation, origin, property or social status, place of residence. The (statutory) victims of human trafficking and domestic violence can be placed at the shelters together with their dependents.

56. The shelter provides the following 24 hour free of charge service for beneficiaries (including minors) and their dependents:

- A safe place to live, suitable for normal existence;
- Nutrition and clothes;
- Participation in the programs of integration into families and society;
- Support minors to access formal and non-formal education;
- All other activities that promote beneficiaries' complete development;
- Other measures defined by the legislation of Georgia;

- Medical assistance;
- Psychological assistance/rehabilitation;
- Legal assistance (including court representation).
- Providing information to the beneficiaries in the language.

57. The services in shelters are also tailored to minors, taking into account their needs.

58. The State Fund is continuously monitoring the activities of shelters on a regular basis, by the visiting group, created at the central office.

59. Currently, there are 4 State funded **Shelters** for the victims of domestic violence. (In Tbilisi-17, beds, Gori-22 beds, Kutaisi-17 beds, Sighnagi-10 beds). In addition, the State Fund subordinates two shelters for victims of human trafficking: in Batumi and in Tbilisi.

60. In 2015, the State fund has renewed memorandums for prevention, effective protection and assistance of the victims of domestic violence with the following local non-governmental organizations:

- Advice Centre for Women "Sakhli";
- Georgian Young Lawyers' Association;
- Anti-Violence Network of Georgia;
- Women's Information Centre;
- Georgian Association for Promotion of Women's Employment "Amagdari'.

61. Criminal Code of Georgia criminalizes act of "coercion" under article 150:

"1. Illegal restriction of a person's freedom of action, i.e. coercing physically or mentally a person to perform or not to perform a certain action the implementation of or abstinence from which is his/her right, or coercing a person to experience an influence that is against his/her will, Shall be punished by a fine, or corrective labour for up to one year or imprisonment for the same term.

2. The same act committed knowingly against a minor, Shall be punished by corrective labour for up two years, or imprisonment for up to eighteen months."

62. The article covers any forms of coercion including forced tests of virginity.

63. 2015 was declared as the Year of Women by the President of Georgia.

64. On 9 and 10 November 2015, Georgian Foreign Ministry in partnership with the United Nations and the European Union, organized the International High-Level Conference: Achieving Gender Equality — Challenges and Opportunities in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Region. Conference focused on three major themes: women's political and economic empowerment; enhancement of women's role in peace and security efforts; ending violence against women and girls. The aim of the Conference was to set a precedent for conducting a regular dialogue on advancement of women's rights and gender equality and for sharing experience in this regard.

65. Around 250 guests and high-ranking officials took part in the conference, including Georgian president, Prime-Minister, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, NATO Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, UN Assistant Secretary-General, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, UN Women Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Director of the UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, high-level representatives of the EU and ENP member states, activists and scholars from governmental and non-governmental organisations and academia.

66. Participants of the Conference endorsed the "Tbilisi Declaration" with explicit commitment towards advancement of gender equality and women's rights as an integral part of sustainable development of the ENP Region.

67. Pursuant to national policies of Georgia, authorities of Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia in exile accord special importance to the gender equality issues. It ought to be mentioned that Georgia is not able to exercise its jurisdiction over the territory of the Autonomous Republic, which is occupied by the Russian Federation. Thus, it is especially important that the relevant authorities of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, who have responsibility towards internally displaced persons from Abkhazia, demonstrate their abilities in implementing the principles of gender equality.

68. On June 25, 2015, training on the raising of gender awareness, which included comprehensive review of main topics in the field of gender equality has been conducted by the expert specially invited by the Justice Department of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia. The event was attended by the supreme representative bodies and executive authorities of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia. In addition, informative booklets and flyers were issued to the stuff members of the justice department. Moreover, From November 25 to December 10, 2016 the Justice Department joined the "16 days campaign against the gender violence".

69. In terms of cooperation with the non-governmental bodies and media, authorities of the Autonomous Republic conducted number of activities and measures, which include informative meetings, seminars, visits in educational centers and discussion of pertinent legislation in force.

Paragraph 25, Participation in political and public life

70. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the full and equal participation of women in political and public life, especially at the senior and decision-making levels, including in local legislative bodies. In particular, it recommends that the State party introduce mandatory quotas for political parties in order to significantly increase the representation of women in national and local legislative bodies. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party involve women in the implementation of its action plan and policies aimed at settling conflicts and promote the active participation of women in high-level meetings in this regard.

Information provided by Georgia

71. Georgia has obligations on the issues of gender equality and elimination of discrimination under the provisions of the Association Agreement between Georgia, of the one part, and the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the other part signed at Brussels on 27 June 2014 and entered into force on 1 July 2016. The Agreement refers to the gender equality issues in the fields of employment, social and environmental policies and sustainable development (Articles 239, 348, 349). According to Georgian legislation, international treaties concluded by Georgia are indispensable part of the legislation, which means that the principles enshrined in the Association Agreement shall be directly applied in the internal legal system.

72. To encourage women's participation in politics and the decision-making, the Organic Law on Political Unions of Citizens foresees the supplementary funding of 30% for any political party whose list of candidates for the membership of the parliament is comprised of at least 30% of the candidates of a different gender within every ten candidates starting from the number one candidate of the list.

73. Furthermore, on May 2, 2014 the new Anti-discrimination Law was adopted. It explicitly prohibits discrimination on the ground of sex and gender identity in both the public and private sector and imposes responsibilities not only on public institutions, but also on any legal entity or individual. Significantly, the Georgian Government has introduced the novelty in the antidiscrimination law — principle of multiple discrimination as women like other disadvantaged groups might be especially susceptible to multiple and concurrent forms of discrimination.

74. Georgia has made a step forward in direction of women's participation in political life, while envisaging financial incentives for political parties to maintain gender balance in party proportional lists. Nevertheless, this measure did not prove to be as efficient as expected. Therefore, taking into account the reality and the recommendation provided by the CEDAW, the need for introduction of mandatory quotas was put high on the agenda. In this regard, in 2016, a draft law was initiated by the member of the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia and the ruling party "Georgian Dream". According to the draft amendments to the Election Code of Georgia each third candidate of the political party candidate list should have 16 been of a different sex. The initiative was approved by the Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of the Parliament of Georgia. In June 2016, the initiative was discussed at the parliamentary plenary session, but due to the lack of consensus on the issue and the risk of the initiative not being voted for had it been put on the voting agenda, the decision was taken to wait for the next session.

75. Besides, in April 2016, amendment was adopted in Law on Gender Equality and Code for Local Self-Government, which aims to establish Gender Equality Councils in the municipalities. Above-mentioned legislative change implements special institutional mechanism for achieving gender equality on the local self-government level, something Georgia has never done before.

76. According to the current data, the number of female employees of Prosecutors Office is 293, among them 135 are prosecutors and investigators, while 16 occupy managerial positions. Detailed statistics on the actual total number of male and female employees in the Civil Service, including on managerial positions is annexed to the present report (See — Annex, statistics prepared by the Civil Service Bureau).

77. It ought to be mentioned, that analytical research has been carried out for studying the Gender Balance and Labour Segregation in Public Service of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia. In overall, the gender equality indicator is positive. However, in several bodies there exists gender polarization (the representative body of the Autonomous Republic is comprised by 55 men and 35 women), which is fully taken into account for further activities aimed at promotion of the gender equality principles.

78. In order to increase the role of the women in Politics, the Justice department of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia has also conducted the report: "Involvement of Women in Political Life — Hindering Factors". The Report provides in-depth analysis of the gender balance situation and emphasizes the main factors that are contributing to the unfavourable circumstances in this regard. Therefore, the Report shall play indispensable part for elaboration of remedying activities and measures.

79. In terms of elaborating organized schedules, on 19 May 2016 the Supreme council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara adopted the action plan of events for the implementation of gender equality policy for 2016-2018 years.

80. In the scope of "Village Support Program", the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure periodically recommends municipalities to ensure involvement of population of rural areas, in particular women, in decision-making process at village meetings.

81. The Geneva International Discussions (GID) have been held since October 2008, according to the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement. The GID is the only forum between Georgia and Russia to address the imminent as well as long-term security and humanitarian challenges. Aiming at the implementation of the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement, the GID is focused on the issues, such as non-use of force, creation of international security arrangements and the safe and dignified return of IDPs and refugees to the places of their origin. The talks are held in the two 17 Working Groups, the first focusing on security and stability in the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia, and the second — on the humanitarian topics, including the issues related to the return of forcefully displaced. The discussions are co-chaired by the representatives of the EU, UN and OSCE. Active participation of women in the GID has been ensured. Namely, out of 10 Georgian participants 4 are women.